

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated February 11, 2005. Claims 1-40 are presented for examination. Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31 are in independent form. Claims 1, 7-11, 15, 17-22, 25, 27-31, 35 and 37-40 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-4, 6-14, 26-34 and 36-40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,415,392 (Suzuki et al.), and Claims 5, 15, 25 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from that patent in view of U.S. Patent 6,707,567 (Suzuki et al.).

As is described in greater detail in the specification, Applicants' invention is concerned with providing a technique by means of which it is possible to monitor, troubleshoot and service, in a unified manner, a set of computers and peripherals, in spite of the great differences that exist between those two classes of apparatuses.

Independent Claim 1 is directed to an information processing apparatus that is connected to a first local managing apparatus that diagnoses an apparatus having a first-type function and a second local managing apparatus that diagnoses an apparatus having a second-type function that is different from the first-type function. The claimed apparatus comprises determination means which determine whether only one of the mentioned local managing apparatuses should make a diagnosis, or both should do so. Also provided are diagnosis control means which cause one of the first local managing apparatus and the second local managing apparatus, or both the first and second local managing apparatuses, to perform diagnosis, based on a determination provided by the determination means.

At the very least, the determination means recited in Claim 1 are believed clearly not to be taught or suggested by anything in the art of record.

Suzuki '392 relates to a remote diagnosis system in which a central computer system receives and acts on user requests, relating to one or more of a number of image-forming apparatuses connected to the central computer system. When a user enters a manual call for assistance (see col. 10, line 30, through col. 11, line 36), the CPU 31, after verifying that the call includes a code identifying the cause of the call, stores that identification, and retrieves a user database corresponding to the user in question. If the necessary user data is found, the CPU 31 determines which computers are capable of handling the request for assistance. The CPU 31 then determines whether the first of those computers is available or busy, and if it is available, it is provided with the request and the relevant information. If that computer is busy, however, then the CPU 31 determines whether the second computer in its list is available and if so, send the request, etc., to the second computer. This processing continues until either an available computer has been given the request to handle, or if all computers on the list are busy, the process continues from the beginning of the list.

A careful review of *Suzuki* '392, however, has failed to reveal anything at all that would suggest the recited determination means. Nothing in that patent is seen to teach or suggest making a determination as to whether (1) a first local managing apparatus or said second local managing apparatus diagnoses the apparatus, or (2) both first and second local managing apparatuses are to diagnose the apparatus, as recited in Claim 1. The processing of the *Suzuki* '392 system described above merely involves cycling through a list of candidate computers to handle a request for assistance, and is not seen even to hint

at any scenario in which two computers would (or even could) be asked to perform diagnosis of a given problem.

In greater detail, the request receiving computer mentioned in that patent numeral 2 in Fig.2, determines where to send the MC data and the User data by the identification code of image-forming apparatus which is included in the received MC data as shown in Fig. 4. The “identification code” mentioned above is to indicate the type of the image-forming apparatus (copier, FAX, printer or duplicator). Furthermore, the request receiving computer refers to the staff control table shown in Fig. 6. If the image-forming apparatus is judged as a copier, the request receiving computer will send the MC data and the User data to a computer which is capable to react toward the copier and let it diagnose. Also, if the image-forming apparatus is judged to be a facsimile, the MC data and the User data will be sent to a computer which is capable of reacting to the facsimile machine’s message and handling the problem.

Within the MC data mentioned above, only one identification code is included, and that code indicates whether the machine originating the manual call for assistance is a copier, a FAX, a printer or a duplicator. That is to say again, nothing has been found in *Suzuki* ‘392 that would suggest a function of sending MC data and User data to both computers which are able to react to a copier and a facsimile, respectively, for example.

Also as shown in the staff control table in Fig. 6 of *Suzuki* ‘392, there may be a case where multiple types of computer such as a Copier Request Dealing Computer and a Facsimile Request Dealing Computer are able to react to a copier, for example. (In Fig.6, First Copier Request Dealing Computer, Second Copier Request Dealing Computer and Second Facsimile Request Dealing Computer are capable to react toward a copier.)

Also, as shown in flow chart of Fig. 8, S6 ~ S13, the request receiving computer checks the multiple types of computer which are capable to react toward a copier one by one and judges whether the computer is busy or not. If the request receiving computer judges the computer as in busy state, it will not send the MC data and the User data to the computer but look for another computer. When the request receiving computer finds a suitable computer that is not busy, it will send the MC data and the User data to the latter computer instead of looking for or judging availability of another candidate computer.

Nothing in *Suzuki* '392 is seen to suggest any scenario in which the request receiving computer would send the MC data and the User data to both a Copier Request Dealing Computer and a Facsimile Request Dealing Computer.

For all these reasons, it is believed clear that Claim 1 is allowable over *Suzuki* '392.

Independent Claims 11, 21 and 31 are, respectively, program, memory-medium and method claims corresponding to apparatus Claim 1, and are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 1.

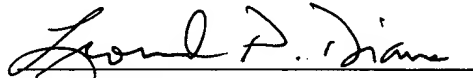
A review of the other art of record, including *Suzuki* '567, has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicants' opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as a reference against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Leonard P. Diana", is written over a horizontal line.

Leonard P. Diana

Attorney for Applicants

Registration No.: 29,296

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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